Genome ‘Adoption’ to Offer New Angles for Research

Prepared by Glenda Isaacs Burgeson, Community editor
Communication & Marketing

Students in CSB/SJU science and mathematics classes will “adopt” a bacterial genome next year as part of a nationwide program designed to spark new interest in research.

CSB and SJU were among 21 team members selected nationwide to collaborate in The Undergraduate Research Program in Microbial Genome Annotation.

“We had a higher than expected response rate to the call for applications, making the selection process extremely difficult,” said Cheryl A. Kerfeld, director of the Education Department at the U.S. Department of Energy Joint Genome Institute (JGI), which administers the program.

CSB and SJU were chosen because of their demonstrated potential to enrich the curriculum with the research, Kerfeld said. “We believe your approach has the potential to contribute to the national model for undergraduate research that we are collectively developing,” she said.

Barbara May, CSB/SJU assistant professor of biology, initiated the application and, with CSB/SJU Associate Professor of Mathematics Jennifer Galovich, attended a workshop in January at JGI in Walnut Creek, Calif., to learn more about the program.

“This is very exciting news for the biology department!” May said. “We will be working with the genome in several biology courses, as well as in math and computer science courses.”

The JGI established an Education Department with the vision that bioinformatics and genome analysis offer new ways to teach curricular standards in the sciences.

“The organism ideally will provide a unifying thread for concepts across the life sciences curriculum,” said Kerfeld, who is also a professor of plant microbial biology at the University of California, Berkeley.

“Prospects are high that students will make scientific discoveries,” she said. “All bacterial genomes are full of novelties; moreover, the organisms selected for ‘adoption’ are relatively unusual and from poorly investigated parts of the tree of life, increasing the likelihood for interesting results in the lab.

“Involved students in a calibrated, stepwise way provides a research-based approach to teaching fundamental concepts in the life science curriculum. And, with the dawning of the era of genomic medicine, when one’s genome sequence is part of their medical record, understanding genomics and bioinformatics is increasingly important for students intent on many fields, including nursing and medicine, law, education and even business.

“We think that Barb and her colleagues and the CSB and SJU students will help to set the standard for 21st century life sciences education,” Kerfeld said.
Saint John’s Community Center Named in Honor of Distinguished Alumnus

SJU has received a leadership gift commitment from members of the McKeown and Cullen families to name the new community center after alumnus Thomas W. McKeown ’52. The 7,500-square-foot environmentally designed McKeown Center, located in Flynntown, will open in August 2009.

“We are greatly honored that the McKeown and Cullen families have provided this leadership gift to Saint John’s,” said Dan Whalen, SJU interim president. “Since his graduation, Tom has amassed a remarkable history of service and support for Saint John’s. We’re delighted that his family has recognized Tom’s 60-year relationship to Saint John’s past and his faith in our future. I am certain that the McKeown Center will be a valued addition to our community and campus life for many years to come.”

“Dad’s legacy from his volunteer work in St. Paul is around community building,” said Dan McKeown ’85. “The McKeown Center is a perfect example of community building at SJU that completes the circle of Dad’s decades of volunteering. Our father has set an example for all of us to serve others. This building symbolizes his six decades of service to the community of SJU.”

Tom McKeown attended Saint John’s Prep School and graduated from SJU in 1952. He worked at Saint John’s from 1955 to 1960 as director of university relations and was the first lay person to have that title. He is the 1993 recipient of the prestigious Fr. Walter Reger Distinguished Alumnus Award.

“Community has always been a core element of the Saint John’s mission,” said Michael Connolly, SJU dean of students. “The McKeown Center in Flynntown will be an example of the mission in action. The center will provide a gathering point for students on the lower campus and is designed as a destination point to help them strive academically and recreate casually with their fellow classmates.”

McKeown is a former member of the Board of Regents and served as the chair from 1987 to 1992. He is also a past president of the Saint John’s Alumni Board. He has served on the Board of Overseers of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library at Saint John’s and currently serves on the Board of Overseers of Saint John’s School of Theology•Seminary.

Durenberger Conducts Second McCarthy Residency

Former Minnesota Sen. Dave Durenberger, a 1955 SJU graduate, conducted the second annual Eugene McCarthy Residency Feb. 9-13 at CSB and SJU.

Highlighting the residency were two panel discussions, including one that included three former senators and a former representative from Minnesota.

“Improving Congress: Advice and Debate from Former Members of the Republican and Democratic Parties,” was Feb. 10 at CSB. The panel consisted of Durenberger, who served in the U.S. Senate from 1978-95; former Sen. Rod Grams, who served from 1995-2001; former Sen. Mark Dayton, who served from 2001-07; and former Rep. Mark Kennedy, a 1979 SJU graduate who served in Congress from 2001-07. Lori Sturdevant, an editorial writer and columnist for the Minneapolis Star Tribune newspaper, was the moderator of the discussion.

Durenberger was also a part of a panel on “Faith, Ethics and Health Care” Feb. 11 at SJU. That panel included Bernard Evans, CSB/SJU associate professor of theology and the Virgil Michel Chair in Theology; Kathleen Twohy, CSB/SJU chair and professor of nursing; and Toby Pearson, executive director of the Catholic Health Association of Minnesota.

An invitation-only luncheon and discussion with Durenberger and Dr. Guy Clifton, a neurosurgeon, clinical investigator, administrator and health policy advocate who is now devoting himself to health policy reform, was on Feb. 12 at CSB.

During his residency, Durenberger spoke to political science, nursing and senior ethics seminar classes at CSB/SJU.

Born in St. Cloud, Durenberger was the son of long-time SJU athletic director George Durenberger. While attending SJU, he was involved in Army ROTC, becoming the program’s first cadet battalion commander and the top honor cadet. He went on to serve in the Army as a military intelligence officer from 1956-63.

Durenberger is currently a senior health policy fellow at the University of St. Thomas, and chairs the National Institute of Health Policy, a program of St. Thomas’ Opus College of Business. He was also named by Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty to lead the Minnesota Citizens Forum on Health Care Costs.

Durenberger’s visit was sponsored by the Eugene J. McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement at CSB and SJU. The center seeks to engage the campus and wider community in debate and discourse regarding public policy and public affairs.

CSB and SJU Celebrate King’s Legacy

The legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was discussed and observed in service and song at CSB and SJU as part of “Discovering Dignity: His Legacy Continues,” Jan. 15-19.

Events included a panel discussion, “Places, People and Practices in Pursuit of Civil Rights” Jan. 15 at CSB. Panelists included Kelly Kraemer, CSB/SJU associate professor of peace studies, who discussed “Bayard Rustin, Sexuality and Civil Rights;” Gary Prevost, CSB/SJU professor of political science, who discussed the civil rights trips he has led to the southern U.S.; Aric Putnam, CSB/SJU assistant professor of communication, who discussed “George Schuyler, Sentimentalism and Satire;” and Kaarin Johnston, CSB/SJU professor of theater, who discussed “Racism and American Theater.”

Other events included an interactive experience looking at how people are sometimes treated differently; a commu-
nity service project in Minneapolis; and a celebration featuring musical and dance performances from different cultural traditions and concluding with a soul food dinner.

**Speaker to Discuss the ‘Niceties’ of Intolerance**

Sometimes, even Minnesota NICE people need help with social interactions.

Dr. Steve L. Robbins will present “Unintentional Intolerance: What NICE People Need to Know” on Thursday, March 19. A national speaker, consultant and writer on issues of diversity, inclusion and cultural competence, Robbins has conducted numerous workshops across the nation for a variety of organizations.

His presentation will be offered on each campus: 9:30-11 a.m. at CSB Gorecki 204; 1:30-3 p.m. at SJU Alumni Lounge.

In a humorous, interactive, non-threatening, yet powerful presentation, Robbins explores the concept of unintentional intolerance. He shows his audience that even caring, well-meaning people are not immune to unintentional intolerance, and he challenges people to be less certain and more curious. His message urges people to be more intentional about being open-minded and inclusive. Robbins’ presentation leaves people motivated, and with a new understanding of diversity and inclusion.

His visit is co-sponsored by Intercultural Directions Council; Companions on a Journey and Corad: Heart Speaks to Heart; OSB Support Staff Guild Assembly; and CSB Support Staff.

To register, visit the online form at www.csbsju.edu/humanresources/forms/trainingregistration.aspx

**Faculty/Staff Notes**

**Warren Bostrom**, CSB/SJU assistant professor of accounting and finance, was published in Accounting Education News, the newsletter of the American Accounting Association. The article was titled “Camtasia Videos: The New Way to Use Microsoft Excel in Accounting Courses.” The article discusses the electronic pedagogy of Camtasia Videos, which capture on-screen movements and with the use of a microphone records audio instruction. The focus of the article was on effective use of Microsoft Excel, but the videos may be used to more effectively teach any software application or to demonstrate online research.


**Bob Kachelski**, CSB/SJU assistant professor of psychology, and **Rodger Narloch**, CSB/SJU associate professor of psychology, received the Society for the Teaching of Psychology Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award for their poster entitled “How Do Students’ Beliefs about Learning Relate to the Teaching Methods and Classroom Activities They Perceive as Effective?” at the 31st Annual National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology (NITOP), Jan. 3-6 in St. Pete Beach, Fla. The award was given to the poster judged by the conference committee to be outstanding in terms of (a) the importance of the research question addressed, (b) the soundness of the research methodology employed, (c) the use of appropriate qualitative and/or statistical analyses, and (d) the clarity with which the implications of the research findings for teaching and learning were expressed.

**Pam Bacon**, CSB/SJU assistant professor of psychology, received the Frank Costin Memorial Award for Excellence for her poster entitled “The More You Know: Reviewing Concepts Using Student-Created Public Service Announcements” at the 31st Annual National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology, Jan. 3-6 in St. Pete Beach, Fla. The award was given to the poster judged by Institute faculty to be most outstanding in terms of contributing to excellence in teaching methods.


**In the Media**


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**John Gagliardi**, SJU head football coach, was featured Jan. 13, in a USA Today article, “Football coaching legends Paterno, Gagliardi meet for first time.”

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**Diaz** was featured Jan. 19, in a WJON radio story, “Obama: Saint John’s, Saint Ben’s prof going to Inauguration,” and a KNSI radio story, “Professor will see Obama sworn in on Tuesday.”

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To share your information and story ideas, simply e-mail them directly to Community at: community@csbsju.edu

Events Calendar

SPRING 2009

Feb. 19-20, Megan McKenna, storyteller, author, and theologian, “This Will Be Remembered of Her: Weaving Together Story and Action,” Women’s Spirituality Conference, (Campus contact: Marian Díaz), Keynote Thursday, Feb. 19, Companions on a Journey Conference, 7:30 p.m., Gorecki 204A, CSB.

Feb. 20, Michael Morton, M.A., L.M.F.T., “Exploring the Limits: Boundary in a Professional Relationship” (Campus contact: Bernadette Dunn or Barbara Sutton), 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Quad 264, SJU.

Feb. 20, The Harlem Gospel Choir (Campus contact: Gwen Schimek), 8 p.m., BAC/Petters Auditorium, CSB.

Feb. 23, Jean Lavigne, assistant professor of environmental studies, Collegial Conversations, “‘Not on My Plate’: Popular Resistance to Genetically Modified Organisms in France” (Campus contact: Scott Richardson), 5:30 p.m., Gorecki 204A, CSB.

March 11, Professor Hasan Jawadi, “Iran and Her Neighbors,” Global Awareness Speaker (Campus contact: Manju Parikh), 7 p.m., Gorecki 204B, CSB.

March 18, Dr. R. Stephen Humphreys, King Abdul Aziz Al Saud professor of Islam studies and professor of history, University of California, Santa Barbara, “Prosperity in Adversity: Adaptations of the Christian Communities of Syria and Mesopotamia to Muslim Rule During the Early Islamic Centuries” (Campus contact: S. Ephrem Hollermann), Koch Chair Lecture, 7:45 p.m., Gorecki 204 A&B, CSB.

March 19, Dr. Steve L. Robbins, “Unintentional Intolerance: What NICE People Need to Know,” 9:30-11 a.m. at CSB Gorecki 204; 1:30-3 p.m. at SJU Alumni Lounge. To register, visit the online form at www.csbsju.edu/human-resources/forms/trainingregistration.aspx

March 19, Dr. Joan Bristol, “The History of Race in the Americas” (Campus contact: Bruce Campbell), 7 p.m., location TBA.

March 22-27, Dwight Pitcaithley (Campus contact: Annette Atkins), time and location TBA.

March 23, Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and president of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, Pax Christi Award (Campus contact: Bernadette Dunn), 8 p.m., Abbey Church, SJU.

March 31, Janet Hope, professor of sociology, Collegial Conversations, “It’s Not Just a Marriage, It’s a Way of Life: Findings From a National Study of the Lives of College Football Coaches’ Wives” (Campus contact: Scott Richardson), 5:30 p.m., Alumni Lounge, Quad, SJU.

April 1, Michael Dennis Browne, Jay Phillips Center Lecture, “A Different Kind of Belonging: Hearing the Voices of Interfaith” (Campus contact: Carol Johannes), 8 p.m. Alumni Lounge, Quad, SJU.

April 2, Virgil Elizondo, Changing Faces Conference (Campus contact: Marian Díaz), Intercultural Ministry and Hospitality Series, time TBA, SJU.

April 6, Professor Faegheh Shirazi, University of Texas, “The History of Veiling in Islam” (Campus contact: Manju Parikh), Global Awareness Speaker, 7 p.m., Gorecki 204 A&B.

April 16, Ravi Shankar & Tina Chang, “New Norton Anthology of Poetry from the Middle East, Asia, and Beyond: Language for a New Century” (Campus contact: Mark Conway), 7-30 p.m., Gorecki 204, CSB.

April 17, A Tribute to Br. Dietrich Reinhardt, OSB (Campus contact: Doris Matter), Saint John’s Day, time TBA, SJU.

April 17-18, Professor Joe Gallion, Pi Mu Epsilon Conference (math) (Campus contact: Kris Nairn), time TBA, Pelligrene Auditorium and surrounding classrooms, SJU.

April 18, Dr. Laura King, social psychologist, U of Missouri, Columbia, keynote speaker at Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference (Campus contact: Pam Bacon), 11 a.m., Alumnae Hall, HCC, CSB.

April 20-23, Davis Wagoner, Scholarship and Creativity Day speaker (Campus contact: Annette Atkins), time and location TBA, SJU.

April 21-22, Nell Noddings, Scholarship and Creativity Day speaker (Campus contact: Tony Cunningham), time and location TBA, CSB

May 9, CSB Commencement, Belinda Jensen, KARE-11 chief meteorologist (Campus contact: Emily Cook), 2 p.m., HCC Field House, CSB.

May 10, SJU Commencement, the Rev. John P. Foley (Pax Christi Award), Dr. Sharon Daloz Parks (Campus contact: Doris Matter), 2 p.m., Abbey Church, SJU.